THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*"—LUKE ii: 14.

No. 52, Vol. LXIV. Thursday, December 25, 1902. Price One Penny.

CHRISTMAS.

BY ELDER WALTER M. WOLFE OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE.

THE celebration of the two greatest feasts of Christendom is intimately associated with Saxon England. Yule-tide has been transformed into Christmas, and Eastre, the spring goddess, has given her name to the festival of the resurrection. Christmas, or more correctly, the "Feast of the Nativity" is celebrated, wherever Christian civilization has gone, in commemoration of the Savior's birth. Our Christmas, with its gifts and good wishes, its traditions of St. Nicholas and of the Christ-child, its hallowed influence of peace and goodwill toward mankind, is essentially English or German in its characteristics. France, Spain and Italy have other church feasts of equal or greater importance, but to the Protestant world Christmas heads the list of holy days in the universality and nature of its observance.

When our forefathers returned from their sea-faring expeditions to their homes on the eastern shores of the North Sea, before they had conquered the land that they afterwards named England, they celebrated their victories at the winter solstice with banquets and revelry. They burned the mighty yule-log on the hearth of the jarl, and the home was hung with holly. Their cousins, the Teutons and the Franks, were accustomed to give gifts at the same season. Not only was it the time of general rejoicing; it was the time of special sacrifice to Odin and Wotan and Thor. What wonder that the early missionaries in their desire to substitute Christian for Pagan rites made Christmas take the place of the heathen midwinter festival, and permitted the newly converted tribes to retain most of their forms and ceremonies, some of which have been handed down to the present day?

To us it seems strange that such a feast should be observed at the coldest, most inclement season of the year. In the primitive church the birth of Christ was celebrated at various dates from October to April. In regard to the observance of December 25th, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says: "There is however a difficulty in accepting this as the date of the nativity, December being the height of the rainy season in Judea, when neither flocks nor shepherds could have been at night on the fields of Bethlehem." Much more in harmony with our ideas upon this subject is the glad spring-tide when all nature rejoices in a new life, and when the hearts of men look forward with hope, rather than dwell gloomily upon the past.

President Joseph F. Smith says upon this subject: "Strictly speaking, if this Church was organized 'one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior in the flesh,' then the sixth of April must have been the anniversary of the Savior's birthday. If the organization of the Church had been before or subsequent to that date, if only by one or any number of days, the great event would have been more or less than one thousand eight hundred and thirty years, by just so many days. Opinions formed by the study of chronological events may or may not be accurate. But we would scarcely think the Lord would make any mistake about dates. Least of all He who was born on that day, and on that day thirty-three years later was crucified." But no matter what differences of opinion concerning the exact time, no vital principle of salvation is concerned in the question, and there is no danger of Latter-day Saints disagreeing over this subject until, as was the case in the early church over the celebration of Easter, an irreparable division is made. For all mankind, in every age, under every clime, the essential fact is that stated so briefly by the Apostle John: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

Since the first *Gloria in excelsis* was hymned by an angel chorus to astonished shepherds, the history of nineteen centuries can almost be traced in the songs of glad hearts that have acknowledged the Infant of Bethlehem as their Savior, Redeemer and King. In His life of sacrifice, His hours of suffering, His death, His resurrection, Jesus is raised so far above our mortal conception of man that we recognize Deity incarnate, and to imitate seems all but hopeless. But the manger in the khan held for all future generations the apotheosis of humanity. He who was King of kings did not forget that humble birth-place or its lessons. He never lost the innocence with which He came to earth; for the innocence of infancy and childhood He had such love as even the fondest parents do not know, and both by Galilee's blue waters and in the fertile valleys of the Nephites He gathered these sinless little ones in His arms and blessed them. Perhaps of all the spirits by which He was surrounded they were the nearest akin to those whom He had left in His Father's house.

On the limestone knoll about which lie clustered the huts of Bethlehem, stands the church and convent of the Nativity. Here, tradition says, was once an inn, where those who were of the seed of David were wont to tarry when they went from all Palestine to the city of their fathers to be taxed. Beneath the cloisters are several caves, and in one of these it is probable that the Savior was born. Justin Martyr, one of the earliest of the Christian

fathers, who wrote less than a century from the time of our Lord, and who was perfectly familiar with the vicinity and its history, has located the spot, and there is no reason to dispute his judgment in the matter. There being no room in the inn these natural stables, where the sheep and cattle were kept, afforded the only shelter for Joseph's humble family—humble, yet doubly royal on account of the presence with them of one in comparison with whom the splendor and power of their father David sank into insignificance.

"And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger." That for which the world had been waiting all the long centuries since the time of Father Adam had come to pass. He whose day Abraham saw with the eye of faith, of whose advent David sang and Isaiah prophesied, "the dayspring from on high," had visited His people. But how different from the Messiah for whom that people were looking—a peasant for a king, a stable for a palace, a manger for a throne, and of all the millions gathered about Jerusalem only a few uncouth shepherds, whose hearts had been set aflame by the celestial choir, to be the courtiers kneeling before the Prince of Peace. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Should we, in the light of two thousand years, be wiser than they? Are we living such lives, so conforming ourselves to His Gospel, that we should recognize Him if He came to us to-day, or would this Christmas-tide find our eyes blinded as were those of the disciples on the way to Emmaus?

It was the custom, especially during the middle ages, for painters and poets to cast a glamour over the scene of the nativity. The infant Redeemer was bathed in a halo of glory. Mary and Joseph were arrayed in purple and fine linen, and crowned with radiant aureoles. Even the cattle knelt in dumb devotion before the little child. Colder in sentiment, more critical in our dealings with sacred history, we brush these fictions of the past to one side. But have we forgotten that there was a halo about the Babe of Bethlehem—a halo invisible to mortal eye? He had come "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace." And the light that burned so dimly on that first Christmas day will brighten and brighten until its rays lighten the whole world. Dimmed for centuries through doubt and sin and apostasy, it is again restored to earth. Like the glory of the rising sun it is spreading from sea to sea and from shore to shore. The isles have seen it and rejoiced and nations that sit in darkness hail its coming.

In the gift-giving and festivities of this Christmas season let us not forget Him whose birth we celebrate. Let the light of His Gospel illuminate our hearts and sanctify our lives so that each succeeding Christmas finds us nearer our divine pattern, the only ideal for mankind—Jesus the Christ.

If we could see our heavenly Father, we should see a being similar to our earthly parent, with this difference: our Father in heaven is exalted and glorified. He has received His thrones, His principalities and powers, and He sits as a governor, as a monarch, and overrules kingdoms, thrones and dominions that have been bequeathed to Him, and such as we anticipate receiving. While He was in the flesh, as we are, He was as we are.—Brigham Young.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1902.

EDITORIAL.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.—The sweetest story ever told is that of the Christ-child's birth, and though we must look back into the hoary past nineteen long centuries, the lapse of time only makes us appreciate more the humble advent of the Eternal King of Israel. We see the Galilean virgin, so "exceedingly fair and white," "most beautiful and fair above all other virgins," growing to purest womanhood, unconscious of her great calling, yet feeling in the depths of her soul, doubtless, an intuition of her blessedness. Then at the proper time the annunciation of the great plan was made to her by the angel Gabriel and she submitted herself to the will of God. Hastening to Elizabeth, filled with rapture and prophetic spirit she declared, "My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

Time passed, the new star appeared in the heavens and the wise men of the east seeing it, and knowing its meaning, followed it toward Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary came down from Nazareth to the city of David, and there in the stable, under the most lowly conditions, Jesus was born. The world knew not that the mightiest spirit ever clothed in flesh had begun His mortal life, but the heavens knew and rejoiced. The veil was burst and to the shepherds a host of angels appeared, singing the immortal song, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." The Prince of Peace had come to earth and now begun the short existence that was to end in such a tragedy. Impostors ruled in the earth; He must suffer before He should exercise His dominion.

The magi from the east, when they had reverently offered their treasures, together with their worship, were the first to give gifts in honor of His birth. The custom is now a general one, and it should typify the gift of salvation to all who obey Him. His grace is free to every creature.

PREPARATION FOR THE NEW VOLUME.—The STAR will appear in the next volume, we hope, in an improved form. We have obtained new type for the headings of general articles and for the body of the smaller type. As time passes, further improvements may be made. Not only in appearance but in contents, we hope that there will also be progress. The STAR has had a wonderful sphere of usefulness in the past. It has continued with-

out the loss of a number since May, 1840. For thirteen years it was issued semi-weekly, but April 24, 1853, under the direction of the late Apostle Franklin D. Richards, it was made a weekly publication. This record makes it the oldest though not the first journal in the Church. Millions of copies have gone out and have been read in all parts of the world where English is spoken, and an inestimable amount of good has been done.

We feel that the STAR should grow in influence as the work of the Lord advances. Naturally on account of the Saints gathering to Zion, our subscription cannot increase so rapidly as converts are made. The prospects in Great Britain are, however, bright, and we have faith that the STAR will yet make many friends who are not now acquainted with its kindly light. It is specially concerned with the work of the Gospel in the great European mission. This is its sphere. The information of how the Lord is aiding His servants and blessing His Saints in these lands should be recorded, and the STAR is the proper place for that record to be made. An invitation is thereextended to the ministry to send in communications on subjects that are timely, faith-promoting and interesting to the readers.

The secret of the Latter-day Saints' success in many lines has been cooperation. This principle is the power that will make the STAR successful. The contributions and editorial work are given gratuitously, and with all concerned it is a labor of love. All may not feel qualified to write, but in this enterprise there are other things to be done. The brother or sister that is gifted with energy and devotion can do an invaluable work in helping forward the MILLENNIAL STAR. It has been suggested, and the idea has been adopted, that at the end of the first quarter of the new year the names of the five most successful workers for the STAR be published. The judgment will depend on the number of copies that have been disposed of during the three months. Of course a subscription will count for as many copies as there are weeks from the time it is secured until the end of the quarter. Each conference president will determine at the end of March the five most successful workers in his field and forward the names and addresses together with the number of STARS disposed of to this office. The local brothers and sisters can probably do better in this matter than the Elders, as they have a wider acquaintance, but all should try to do their best. The branch presidents can keep account of the numbers disposed of in their districts.

We hope that our former subscribers will still continue their patronage and that new friends may be gained. Every conference throughout the European mission should have at least one copy and every Elder in Great Britain should of course read the STAR.

J. J. C.

THE STAR wishes the Elders and sisters, who have labored so faithfully, and all the Saints and friends, a merry Christmastide.

PRESIDENT LYMAN has just received a letter bearing the greetings of the season and a message of good will from Apostle Matthias F. Cowley and twenty-four other members of the prayer circle over which President Lyman presides when at home.

From Reykjavik, Iceland, our lone missionary, Elder John Johannesson, writes that he is enjoying health and spiritual blessings, and through the favor of the Lord he will finish the publication of two thousand copies of his book by next February. These he will labor to distribute among the people of Iceland.

President Joseph F. Smith announced his desire that on Sunday, December 21st, special services should be held in honor of the birth of the Prophet Joseph, which as announced last week came on the twenty-third inst. We regret that notice did not reach us in time to arrange such services. In the Liverpool branch Elders Andrew Jenson and Joseph Eckersley were led to speak Sunday evening on the importance of the Prophet's life and work.

Transfers.—Elder Joseph H. Cutler is transferred from the Nottingham and Elder George T. Badger from the Grimsby to the Birmingham conference.

Departures.—The following named returning missionaries sailed with the company that left Liverpool, in charge of Elder William J. Facer, per s.s. *Commonwealth*, December 20, 1902: William J. Facer, William F. Murphy, George H. Sperry, Walter J. Kelly, Edward J. Gardner, David L. Dowding, Alexander M. Faddies, Charles H. Smith, John H. Woodbury, David McCleery, Walter Read, Joseph A. White, LeRoy Brough, John E. Lunt, Sampson Knowles, William A. Koldewyn, Marlon Van Cott, George Farrell, Chris P. Christensen, Joseph Nelson, Carl A. Mattsson, Peter W. Erickson, Peter Sundwall. Jr., Anders Anderson, Axel F. Andreasen, Nephi M. Nielsen.

DIETETICS.

BY ELDER JOHN W. SAUNDERS, PRESIDENT OF THE MANCHESTER CONFERENCE.

The Word of Wisdom, the little understood and less practiced law of God, is still before us. All laws of health are laws of God, because everything that is good and practical is of the Lord, and of all things practical this is one of the best. If there is one subject more important than another to the temporal welfare of the Saints, it is the Word of Wisdom. How can we have a contented, peaceful spirit and economize its powers, without a good, healthy body to live in? The study of all studies is the human being, the physical part as well as the spiritual. The dietetic law pertains to the physical and not the spiritual, only as it is pleasant for the spirit to dwell in a healthy habitation.

The Word of Wisdom means health. How true the proverb—"There is nothing of which men are so fond and yet so careless as life." They cling to life tenaciously when it comes to the point of death, but few take thought of it in the bloom of health and strength. There are plenty of men who think while in the vigor of life that they can eat anything and resist all evil effects. They forget the law of retribution and that they are liable to meet the terrible days of a deranged physical system and pay dearly the penalty of violated laws.

The object of dietetics is not longevity; longevity will take care of itself.

It is illustrated in this—"Desire not to live long but well. How long we live. not years but actions tell." So that it matters not how long we live, that is not the object of the Word of Wisdom, but the purpose is good health and strength, at least a normal condition, while we do sojourn on earth—strength that we may walk and not be weary, a physical condition that we may run and not faint.

The Lord made no mistake when he classified the different grains to His various creatures. As Paul says there are several different kinds of flesh. He made no mistake when He said that hot drinks are not good for man, and when He spoke of "hot drinks" He meant tea and coffee, and not water. Tea and coffee were always served at a hot temperature. There was no idea of the temperature of the beverage, but of its nature upon the system. The only difference in hot and cold water is in the time of assimilation. Of course water is nature's drink and always acts in a normal order, either cold or hot.

When you take tea, coffee, or intoxicating drinks you merely mortgage your future strength or energy for present use. Do you think this physical mortgage can be settled without interest? Do you think you can deceive the laws of nature in your being? Do you think that the divine law is more likely to be deceived than man? This law will claim reconciliation in all things. These strong drinks are not foods but nerve stimulants, and when you take one of these you are stimulated, and fancy you are strong; you feel revived, you feel better, because of the delusion.

This law of health, the Word of Wisdom, should be observed in order that the blood may be kept clear, clean, well fed and in a normal condition, because the blood carries the conditions of good or ill to all parts of the body. In this contact the body is either built up and its wasted energy supplied, or it is distressed according to the quality of the blood. When you feed the blood with stimulants and improper foods, instead of nature's food and drink, you poison the tiny disks that float to every part of the body, to give you force and physical ability to act and to be acted upon. So when you take those forbidden stimulants, the blood is susceptible immediately to them and carries them on in the system causing apparent life but real weakness.

The appetite, like the intellectual and physical man, needs educating. Those who are addicted to this form of slavery never tire of the stimulants or narcotics that they take, while with the most wholesome food, however, you are inclined to get tired of the sameness, because nature requires a variety. The man that uses tea, coffee or tobacco or strong drink never desires a change from them. Why does the woman feel faint without her tea or coffee, and the man irritable and sick without his smoke? Because they have thus wrongly educated their appetites. They labor under the condition of slavery and not in accord with nature's normal desire and taste for food to satisfy the hunger; not in that condition that maketh a physical freedom, as the Gospel makes a spiritual and social liberty.

We sometimes overlook, as Latter-day Saints, that part of the Word of Wisdom which promises us the most important privileges and rights. It says that if we remember and obey the commandments, we shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures. This might possibly help us out in those things we call mysteries. Who is there that does not

need all the knowledge and wisdom he can get? If there were no revelation or commandment on this subject, from the dietetic or hygienic standpoint its importance would be self-evident to all thoughtful persons, for they see that such temperance as the Word of Wisdom teaches is necessary in obtaining the blessing of good health, which is one of man's greatest rewards in this life. We should be careful not to contract habits that deprive us of the full and healthful enjoyment of life, whether that life be long or short.

Now suppose all the Latter-day Saints should keep the Word of Wisdom? Supposing tea, coffee, tobacco and strong drink were never known in their habitations, do you think it would preach the Gospel to the world? Yes, and it would assist us very much in our missionary work as servants of God in teaching the world a better way to live. Our example as a people would travel far and wide for the good of the Saints, as well as for the conversion of the world, and all would redound to the glory of God, and His important work. This dietetic law is not only a word, a command, a revelation, but like all other principles, it has a philosophy with it, the effects of obedience to it vindicates its practicability in our every day lives.

Let the Saints live this divine law that they may be more blessed. Let us live it that the weak may be stronger and that the strong may be more able. Those who do not do so are the losers.

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

O bells, sweet bells! across the years,
Half gay, half sad, your chiming;
Old joys ye tell, old sorrows swell
Throughout your tender rhyming.
O happy bells! through coming years,
We hear in your glad sending
The message still of peace, good will,—
All jarring discords blending.

SELECTED.

DIED.

JONES.—Of consumption, December 13, 1902, Beatrice Ellen Jones of Stroud, Gloucestershire. Deceased was twenty-seven years old and her illness had lasted twelve months. She died as she had lived in full faith in the Gospel.—*Deseret News please copy.*

CONTENTS:

Christmas 817
Editorials:
The First Christmas 820
Preparation for the New Volume 820
Editorial Notes 821
Transfers 822
Departures 822
Dietetics 822
Poetry:
Christmas Bells 824

EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY FRANCIS M. LYMAN, 42 ISLINGTON, LIVERPOOL:

FOR SALE IN ALL THE CONFERENCES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN GREAT BRITAIN.